



MaineDOT Flash Facts:

Topic: Moose Safety

Crashes with large wildlife such as Moose have increased dramatically over the past 15 years (moose crashes have nearly doubled). There are approximately 700 Moose-vehicle crashes a year in Maine resulting in an average of approximately 3 fatalities and 200 injuries.

June is one of the top months for moose-vehicle collisions. In late spring and early summer, moose search for new vegetation. This is a particularly dangerous time for motorists. The MaineDOT indicates that some of the most dangerous locations are:

- Alongside roadways. These are the first areas to green up and that's why it's common to see moose by the side of the road in the spring & early summer.
- Roads bordering wetlands are dangerous locations all summer - as the aquatic plants mature, they become a natural moose snack bar.
- Black flies bother moose as much as they bother us, so moose escape from the woodlands and onto the roads

With an adult moose weighing up to 1500 pounds and nine feet tall, it is no surprise that a collision with a moose can be deadly. A moose's body stands taller than most car hoods, making them a real threat to vehicle occupants in crashes.

During a 3-year period, approximately 2,000 moose collisions occur in Maine and fatalities occur almost every year.

- Nearly 90% of crashes occur between dusk and dawn.
- Nearly 80% of the crashes occur during hours of darkness.
- 24 of the 28 fatalities over the past 10 years occurred when it was dark.
- Moose are fast – and extremely unpredictable.

The MaineDOT suggests the following to promote safety around wildlife:



- Be aware and attentive, especially at night. Moose are dark colored, their bodies are above your headlights and their eyes don't reflect light well. Use your high beams.
- Remember that you are just as likely to strike a moose on the Maine Turnpike and Interstate as Route 1 in northern Maine.
- Use your high beams whenever it's legal and safe to do so.
- Have a safe escape route planned at all times in the event a moose or something else unexpectedly enters the road.
- REDUCE YOUR SPEED, especially at night.
- Do not overdrive your headlights. Allow enough sight distance to react and stop if an animal enters the roadway.
- Always scan the roadside for these "hidden hazards".
- Don't try to drive around the moose.
- Don't get out of the car – the moose may decide to charge.
- Give the moose plenty of room – it will eventually wander back into the woods.

Large animal collisions are not only a Northern Maine phenomenon, or even just a rural Maine problem. Moose collisions occur in every county in Maine and they can be fatal.

The MaineDOT has developed a Maine Moose Crash map that shows crashes occur on all roads across the state. These crashes can occur on the Maine Turnpike south of Portland as well as in expected locations such as northern Maine. To get a copy of the new 2005 map, go to:

<http://www.state.me.us/mdot/safety-programs/maine-crash-data.php>

To get a copy of the informational brochure, go to:

http://www.state.me.us/mdot/safety-programs/pdf/moose_brochure_2004.pdf

Be a Road Model: always be on the look out for moose and other animals. Be especially alert for moose at night...and always wear your safety belt.